

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 90
By Henry

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Dick Battle of Nashville.

WHEREAS, it was with great sadness and a profound sense of loss that the members of this General Assembly learned of the death of Richard S. "Dick" Battle, one of the most gifted and highly respected newspaper reporters that this state has ever produced; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Battle distinguished himself and earned his stellar reputation as a reporter and columnist for the *Nashville Banner*, covering the affairs of city hall and Metro government with acumen and integrity for some thirty-five years; and

WHEREAS, he worked for the *Nashville Banner* for forty years overall, beginning in 1933 as a police reporter and transferring to the city hall beat in 1937; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Battle proudly served his country during World War II as a member of the United States Army, and was discharged with the rank of captain; and

WHEREAS, after the war, he returned to the *Banner*, where he gained a wide following among newspaper readers as he combined a remarkable talent for creative writing with the ability to report hard news in a readable and informative manner; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Battle's "City Hall" column was widely read in influential circles, as well as being immensely popular among the rest of Nashville's populace, and he became a well-known and admired figure, both in the community and in journalistic circles; and

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WHEREAS, Mr. Battle, who preferred to be called a newspaper reporter rather than the more sophisticated label of journalist, retired on January 1, 1973 after an illustrious career of reporting Nashville government news that spanned the administrations of five different mayors; and

WHEREAS, an immensely gifted writer, Mr. Battle helped to draft legislation that created the Community Services Commission report in 1951; this report was the forerunner of the Metropolitan Charter for Davidson County and the City of Nashville, which has been used as a model for other cities across the country; and

WHEREAS, a native of St. Louis, Missouri, Dick Battle came to Nashville in 1916; he was a 1925 graduate of Goodlettsville High School, where he played on the school's first football team; and

WHEREAS, he returned to Nashville as a draftsman and commercial artist in 1929, after studying architecture at Washington University; and

WHEREAS, he joined the staff of the *Evening Tennessean* in 1932; and

WHEREAS, in 1938, he was married to the former Dorothy Cunningham; and

WHEREAS, after his retirement from the *Nashville Banner*, Dick and Dorothy Battle worked with purpose and commitment for nearly twenty years with the East Nashville Cooperative Ministry and their church, East End Methodist Church, helping to lighten life's burden for their neighbors who were in need; and

WHEREAS, the Battles were also dedicated volunteers in the East Nashville Cooperative Ministry mission store, where clothing, household goods and furniture are available for free to people with low incomes; and

WHEREAS, he also served with distinction on the board of directors of both the East Nashville YMCA and Outreach Nashville; and

WHEREAS, throughout the years, Mr. and Mrs. Battle evinced their robust faith in the Lord through their active membership at East End Methodist Church, where he served as

Sunday School superintendent and teacher and editor of the church bulletin at various times;
and

WHEREAS, a gentle man who tried to cover some of his sensitivity by exhibiting a somewhat gruff exterior, Mr. Battle also worked after his retirement as a public relations consultant to then Mayor Beverly Briley through the firm of Creative Consultant Enterprises; and

WHEREAS, besides his wife, Dick Battle is survived by a daughter and son-in-law, Ellen and Jorge Fernandez of Dallas, Texas; a brother, Gerald Battle of Nashville; and a grandson, Kevin Tucker of Arlington, Virginia; and

WHEREAS, for forty years, Dick Battle kept the good people of Nashville well informed about the inner workings of their city's government with reporting and writing that demonstrated his creativity, his intelligence and his uncanny ability to cut to the very essence of any given news story without sacrificing content or readability; and

WHEREAS, men of Dick Battle's stature do not often walk among us, and his death creates a void that will be difficult to fill; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby pause to honor the memory of Richard S. "Dick" Battle, reflecting fondly upon his numerous contributions and superlative career as a newspaper reporter and columnist and his even more significant legacy of outstanding public service as a human being of purpose and commitment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we extend our sympathy and condolences to Mr. Battle's family and many friends.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.